



Fir Vale Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Admissions Policy

2026/27

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Fir Vale Academy Admissions Arrangements for 2026/27

Introductory Statement

Fir Vale Academy is an 11-16 school in Sheffield Local Authority. The school is part of United Learning¹.

Fir Vale Academy seeks to bring out 'The best in everyone'. The school serves all children in the local community. All children will be admitted without reference to ability or aptitude. There are no faith criteria as part of the admissions policy. Children from families of all faiths, or none, are very welcome.

Admission Numbers

The school has an admission number of 210 for entry in Year 7 in September 2026. The admissions numbers for the remaining year groups are as follows:

- Year 8 – 210
- Year 9 – 210
- Year 10 – 210
- Year 11 – 210

The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year group are received, places will be offered at the school to all those who have applied.

Application Process

Fir Vale Academy participates in the Sheffield Local Authority's process for co-ordinating school offers. This means you will need to complete your local authority common application form which can be found here <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/schools-childcare/admissions/how-apply-school-sheffield>

Oversubscription Criteria

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order²:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order, including children who appear (to the trust) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Priority will next be given to the siblings of pupils attending the school at the time the application is received.
3. Priority will next be given to children based on their exceptional medical or social needs. Each application must include evidence, from a medical specialist or social worker of the child's need and why they must attend this school rather than any other, based on those needs. If evidence is not submitted to the school with the application, a child's medical or social needs cannot be considered.
4. Priority will next be given to the children of staff who have been recruited to fill a skills-shortage area.
5. Other children.

¹ United Learning is a multi-academy trust. For more information about the trust visit www.unitedlearning.org.uk

² Please also refer to the Notes section

Tie-break

If in categories 2-5 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the child living closest to the school will be given priority for admission. We use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data³.

If there are insufficient places to accommodate all applicants and after using all oversubscription criteria, applicants for the final place(s) cannot be split, the remaining place(s), will be allocated using a random allocation process (carried out by the Sheffield Local Authority on the Trust's behalf) if the distance between a child's home and the academy is equidistant in any two or more cases.

Random allocation will not be applied to multiple birth siblings (twins and triplets etc.) from the same family tied for the final place. When considering twins, triplets or other multiple births places, where the final place available was offered to a twin, triplet or multiple birth, a place will be offered above the published admission number to the other twin, triplet or multiple birth children whose twin, triplet or multiple birth was offered a place within the admission number.

Late Applications

All applications received by the school after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. Late applications will be considered after those received on time. If, following consideration of all applicants the school is oversubscribed, parents may request that their child is placed on the school's waiting list. Admission of children outside their normal age group.

Admission of Children Outside of their Normal Age Group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. To do so parents should include a request with their application, specifying why admission out of normal year group is being requested.

When such a request is made, the academy trust will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

Waiting Lists

The school will operate a waiting list. Where the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the school year. This will be maintained by Fir Vale Academy, and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

In Year Admissions: Arrangements for Admitting Pupils Outside of the Normal Admissions Round

Applications outside of the normal admissions round are known as in-year admissions.

³ Please also refer to the Notes section

Parents are encouraged to apply for a place in-year via the Sheffield Local Authority by completing this form here www.sheffield.gov.uk/schools-childcare/admissions/how-apply-school-sheffield. Parents will be notified by the Sheffield Local Authority of the outcome of their in-year application within 10 school days of the receipt of the application.

If the year group applied for has a place available, the child will be admitted unless there are reasonable reason(s) not to admit in accordance with Schools Admissions Code. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria outlined above shall apply. Parents/carers whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal (see below).

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. The appeal panel will be independent of the Academy. The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the School Admissions Appeals Code published by the Department for Education. The determination of the appeal panel will be made in accordance with the Code and will be binding on all parties.

Appellants should file an appeal via the Sheffield Local Authority.

If appellants decide to appeal, they will receive an advance notice of the hearing date. They will be invited to attend the appeal. The hearing will be conducted as informally as possible, and there will be an opportunity for parents/carers to put forward their case and ask questions. If the appeal is refused, the Local Authority will not consider a further appeal for admission in the same academic year, unless there is a significant material change in circumstances of the parent or child.

Fair Access Protocol

Fir Vale Academy participates in the In-Year Fair Access Protocol managed by Sheffield Local Authority in order to minimise the number of students who are at risk of underachievement by being out of school. This is reviewed by the local Admissions Forum on a regular basis.

Notes

Looked After Child

“Looked After Child” means any child who is in the care of a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was “previously a Looked After Child” means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976 or under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order or Child Arrangement Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence in order to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of the Academy Trust what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by the Academy Trust. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the Academy Trust to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, the Academy Trust may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence in order to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of the Academy Trust what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by the Academy Trust. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the Academy Trust to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, the Academy Trust may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

Home Address

The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child’s residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received where the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be taken as the address where the child is registered with the doctor. If the residence is not split equally between both parents, then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week.

Sibling

‘Sibling’ means a natural brother or sister, a half brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half-brother or sister, a step brother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of the same family who, in any of these cases, will be living at the same address at the date of their application for a place.

Medical and Social Need

‘Social need’ does not include a parent’s wish that a child attends the school because of a child’s aptitude or ability or because their friends attend the school. ‘Medical need’ does not include mild medical conditions.

Distance

To determine distance from the school we will measure the distance between a child’s permanent home address and the school. This will be done in conjunction with the Local Authority; we will use their system to measure distance to ensure alignment with the Local Authority’s wider role in admissions.

The distance between the child’s permanent home address and the school will be measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data. A point within the child’s home and the point defined

as within the school will be specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. Distances will be measured in accordance with the practices set out by Sheffield Local Authority.

